New guidelines of NABARD

2824. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development proposes to introduce the new guidelines which will ensure increased and quick outcome from the banks to the farming community to minimize assistance;

(b) if so, what are the details of the guidelines issued;

(c) whether all Nationalised and private Banks have been urged to consider these guidelines prepared by the NABARD;

(d) if so, to what extent these banks have followed the same guidelines; and

(e) to what extent it has been beneficial to farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM) : (a) and (b) The Government announced a special farm credit/package on 18th June, 2004 to double the flow of credit to agriculture in the next three years. In order to achieve the target, the following measures/guidelines have been issued/taken by the NABARD:—

(i) Convenors of State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) have been advised to convene special meetings in all States;

(ii) Revision/reviewing of scale of finance in all districts;

(iii) Model schemes have been formulated and 143 model bankable schemes have been circulated for implementation;

(iv) New scheme of joint liability groups has been launched to finance tenant farmers/ oral lesses/share croppers;

(v) Guidelines regarding debt relief measures to be adopted for making 'farmers in distress' and 'farmers in arrears' eligible for fresh bank credit have been issued.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Compliance with the guidelines by banks has resulted in enhanced credit to agriculture sector. Credit to agriculture sector of

Rs 1,04,718 crore has been disbursed till 28th February, 2005 in the year 2004-05 and is considered to be satisfactory progress. Against a target of 50 lakh new farmers in 2004-05, 63.74 lakh new farmers have been financed till 28th February, 2005. An amount of Rs. 9141.29 crore upto the end of February 2005 has been provided as debt relief by all agencies during the year.

Income tax collection

2825. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the performance and achievements of Income Tax Department vary from region to region though the law of the land and the procedure and one and the same and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is envisaged to have a change in the objective, organizational set-up, operational approach and manpower for better performance;

(c) how targets for collection of Income Tax are fixed; and

(d) whether the potentiality of the area, environment and the quality of Income Tax personnel concerned, etc. are taken into account or the targets are just fixed on a conventional basis usually followed and periodically reviewed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S. S. PALANIMANICKAM) : (a) Yes Sir, the performance and achievements of Income Tax Department vary from region to region as the levels of economic development, levels of business/commercial activities; levels of industrial growth and income-levels are widely different in various regions of the country. The difference in economic levels is particularly wide between urban and rural areas.

(b) No, Sir. The current organizational set-up and policies of the Income Tax Department are already consistent with and oriented towards the divergent economic levels existing in the country.

(c) Budget Estimates for collection of Income Tax are fixed on the